



EUROPEAN UNION

OSCE Special Permanent Council No. 1380 Vienna, 5 July 2022

EU Statement on the Russian Federation's ongoing aggression against Ukraine

1. Mr Chair, we are grateful that you have called this Special Permanent Council today, as we share your denunciation of the unrelenting horror Russia is inflicting upon the Ukrainian people. The European Union strongly condemns the intensification of Russian missile strikes on the territory of Ukraine, targeting residential areas and civilian infrastructure.
2. We condemn in the strongest terms the killing of civilians as a result of these indiscriminate missile attacks, in particular the attack on a crowded shopping center in Kremenchuk which killed at least 20 people last week. Last Friday night, more than 18 people died in an attack on Odesa and on Saturday in the city of Mykolaiv, where at least 21 civilians were killed when Russian missiles struck apartment buildings. Similar blatant attacks have also taken place in the Luhansk, Donetsk, Kharkiv, Kyiv, Zhytomyr, Dnipropetrovsk and Sumy regions of Ukraine. Sievierodonetsk and Lysychansk have been under constant Russian artillery and air strikes, leaving both cities heavily damaged, just as Mariupol some weeks ago. We express our deepest sympathy and our condolences to the families of the victims and stand in solidarity with the Ukrainian people. We call on Russia to immediately stop terrorising the Ukrainian population with its attacks on civilians and civilian infrastructure as well as to allow immediate humanitarian access and the safe passage of all civilians concerned.
3. 20 years ago, the Rome Statute of the International Criminal Court (ICC) entered into force. The adoption of the Rome Statute was a major step forward in the evolution of

the international legal order and a breakthrough in the global fight against impunity. It defines war crimes as, inter alia, “serious violations of the laws and customs applicable in international armed conflict” and outlines that grave breaches of the Geneva Conventions of 1949 amount to war crimes.

4. It is with deep regret that we observe that Russia, since the start of its unprovoked and unjustified war of aggression against Ukraine, seems to be violating many provisions of the Geneva Conventions and its additional Protocol II of 1977, with actions that may amount to war crimes under international humanitarian law. The rights to life, liberty and security are under constant attack in Ukraine. The continued indiscriminate shelling of civilians and civilian objects in order to instil further fear in the innocent civilians of Ukraine is abhorrent and unacceptable.
5. We recall that international humanitarian law, including on the treatment of prisoners of war, must be respected. All Ukrainians, especially children, who have been forcibly removed to Russia must be immediately allowed to return safely. Russia, Belarus and all those responsible for war crimes and the other most serious crimes will be held to account for their actions, in accordance with international law.
6. The European Union continues to resolutely condemn Russia’s premeditated, unprovoked, unjustified and illegal war of aggression against Ukraine in the strongest possible terms. We call on Russia to respect the sovereignty and territorial integrity of Ukraine within its internationally recognised borders and to immediately and unconditionally cease its military actions and withdraw all its troops and equipment from the entire territory of Ukraine, including the illegally annexed Crimean peninsula. We will never recognise any illegal entities nor annexation of Ukraine’s territory. We also reiterate our call on Belarus to stop enabling the Russian aggression and to abide by its international obligations.
7. There can be no impunity for war crimes and other atrocities. We welcome and support the ongoing work to investigate war crimes and other atrocity crimes, including by the Prosecutor of the International Criminal Court, the independent international commission of inquiry mandated by the United Nations Human Rights

Council as well as the national investigations by the Office of the Prosecutor General of Ukraine. The EU is providing extensive support to the Office of the Prosecutor General of Ukraine, mainly through the EU Delegation and the EU Advisory Mission Ukraine. We also note the establishment of a Joint Investigation Team coordinated by Eurojust, whose role has been reinforced, and the ongoing operational support provided by Europol. The reports of the Expert Missions under the Moscow Mechanism is an important OSCE contribution in this regard. We also appreciate ODIHR's initiative to document violations of human rights and international humanitarian law standards and welcome the recent visit of its Director, Matteo Mecacci, to Ukraine.

8. The European Union hails the courage and determination of the Ukrainian people and its leadership in their fight to defend the sovereignty, territorial integrity and freedom of their country and build a peaceful, democratic and prosperous future within the European family. It is also in that spirit of peace and prosperity of the continent that the European Council recognised last week the European perspective of Ukraine, the Republic of Moldova and Georgia, and decided to grant the status of candidate country to Ukraine and to the Republic of Moldova. We remain strongly committed to providing further military support to help Ukraine exercise its inherent right of self-defence against the Russian aggression and defend its territorial integrity and sovereignty. The European Union will continue to provide political, financial and humanitarian support to Ukraine.

We stand with Ukraine.

The Candidate Countries REPUBLIC of NORTH MACEDONIA*, MONTENEGRO* and ALBANIA*, and the EFTA countries ICELAND, LIECHTENSTEIN and NORWAY, members of the European Economic Area, as well as UKRAINE, the REPUBLIC OF MOLDOVA, GEORGIA, ANDORRA, MONACO and SAN MARINO align themselves with this statement.

* Republic of North Macedonia, Montenegro and Albania continue to be part of the Stabilisation and Association Process.